

Your Child's Experience

Your child has decided to take part in a life-changing experience, and we want to equip you, the parent, with the tools necessary to partner in this trip as much as possible. The times before, during, and after an Amor Ministries' mission trip will bring new challenges, growth opportunities, and eye opening moments. One thing is for sure, your child will not return the same person who left, but this is a good thing.

Each group's trip timeline will vary slightly and we recommend you contact your child's trip leader for specific questions. Below you will find the general timeline for an Amor mission trip.

Crossing the Border: Today your child will cross the border into Mexico. An Amor representative will meet the group and escort them through the border crossing all the way to camp. Once over the border, the scenery changes dramatically. The pristine homes and American cleanliness gives way to a different set of smells, sights and sounds. The eyes of the group are fixed upon what lies outside the windows. Your child will drive approximately 45 minutes to the secure Amor campground where he or she will set up camp, home for the next week.

Day One: Today your child will pile into a vehicle and drive to the group's building site. The mood of the group is often one of nervous anticipation. There is an excitement about what they are about to do and some reservation as to how they'll build a house in such a short period of time. Once at the site that will hold the new home, the group leader will assess the situation and will build a strategy for the week. Soon your child is digging, leveling, mixing cement, and taking part in some pretty tough manual labor. By the end of today, the group will hopefully finish the foundation to be ready for framing on day two.

Day Two: Today your child will wake up sore. There was a lot of mixing cement by hand the day before! The cement slabs have hardened and the group can continue in the building process. If you were to watch today, you'd see your child sawing, hammering, measuring, and becoming an expert in the art of framing. By the end of this day, the walls and roof are together and positioned on the foundation. There is a visible frame to the house and the project is taking on a shape that will lend to a sense of accomplishment.

Day Three: Your child is probably dreading a wake-up call by day three. As the week comes to its mid-point, time is flying by and your child is acclimated to his or her surroundings. The once intimidating poverty has become a part of daily expectations, and it's now been week without TV, Xboxes, computers and life's other distractions . . . and they are really enjoying themselves! Stress is sometimes high on this day as the reality of only one more day to build is at the forefront. With the walls standing and prepared for stucco, the roof completed and the door and windows installed, the final day will be left for two coats of stucco. The once empty lot is really taking on the form of a home that will keep a family together.

Day Four: Today is filled with much emotion. The group knows it is the last time they will be with their Mexican families, and they begin to realize that they will soon have to re-enter into life back

home. Your child will go to the work site excited to finish up the two coats of stucco and give the gift of a completed home to their family.

This is an incredible moment.

With a translator at hand, the group will gather the family together to express their love, but more importantly, the great love and grace of God. The key, a symbol of safety and stability for this family, is used to unlock the door to their new home.

Throughout the course of the week, your child has come to a place where, without thought, he or she has adjusted to seeing poverty, and instead of being threatened, finds comfort in these new surroundings. He or she also begin to see change happening. There is an understanding your child can make a difference, they have something to offer the world, and he or she has a role to play.

By taking part in providing the gift of a simple home, your child has experienced a glimpse of the joy that comes when we give rather than receive. This is just the beginning of a life that is shaped by not only building into the lives of a family across the border, but making a difference in the lives of each person your child will encounter upon returning home from the Amor mission trip.